

Fiscal Note

BILL # HB 2428

TITLE: private universities; Arizona teachers academy

SPONSOR: Gress

STATUS: As Introduced

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Description

The bill would allow private postsecondary educational institutions that offer post-baccalaureate teacher certification programs to participate in the Arizona Teachers Academy.

Estimated Impact

The Arizona Teachers Academy receives \$15 million from the General Fund annually. To the extent that private universities are added to the program at the current funding level, General Fund distributions to the public universities and community colleges could decrease. The impact ultimately depends on total legislative appropriations and the criteria set by ABOR for distributing funds to all eligible postsecondary institutions.

Analysis

Pursuant to A.R.S. 15-1655, the Arizona Teachers Academy provides scholarships to students enrolled in a public university program, community college post-baccalaureate teacher certification program, and teachers seeking national board certification. To be eligible for a scholarship, students must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). For each academic year that a student receives a scholarship, the student commits to teaching in an Arizona public school for one full school year. Since the program's inception in FY 2018, the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) has provided administrative support for the academy.

The Arizona Teachers Academy receives \$15 million from the General Fund annually. This dollar level is determined in the General Appropriation Act and is not tied to a statutory funding formula. Statute requires ABOR to establish criteria for distributing funds to each eligible postsecondary institution. ABOR's policy manual states that monies are allocated based on prior year enrollment in the academy at each participating institution.

The bill would allow private university students to participate in the Arizona Teachers Academy and would limit scholarships to the average in-state tuition and fees charged by the state's public universities after all financial aid is received. In FY 2023, the average tuition cost for public universities is approximately \$6,464 after applying federal financial aid. We do not have access to sufficient data to determine how many private university students would become eligible for scholarships under the bill's provisions. As an example, it was stated in House Education Committee testimony that Grand Canyon University would have approximately 3,000 eligible students at a cost of \$17 million (if all students were funded).

The total number of Arizona Teachers Academy scholarships awarded each year is subject to legislative appropriations. The bill does not include additional appropriations to reimburse private universities for their costs. To the extent that private universities participate in the academy at the current funding level, the amount allocated to the public universities and community colleges may decrease. Criteria for distributing the funds between all participating institutions would ultimately be determined by ABOR.

Local Government Impact

None

2/7/23

